

LINDA J. LOPEZ
1700 WEST WASHINGTON, SUITE H
PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85007-2844
CAPITOL PHONE: (602) 926-4089
CAPITOL FAX: (602) 417-3029 TOLL
FREE: 1-800-352-8404
llopez@azleg.state.az.us



DEMOCRATIC ASSISTANT LEADER

COMMITTEES:

APPROPRIATIONS (B)
HEALTH
RULES

JOINT LEGISLATIVE BUDGET
COMMITTEE

TUCSON LEGISLATIVE OFFICE 400
WEST CONGRESS, SUITE 201
TUCSON, ARIZONA 85701 TUCSON
PHONE: (520) 398-6000 TUCSON
FAX: (520) 398-6028

Arizona House of Representatives

Phoenix, Arizona 85007

DISTRICT 29

August 2, 2005

*Chief, Regulations & Procedures Division
Alcohol & Tobacco Tax & Trade Bureau
ATTN: Notice No. 41
P.O. Box 14412
Washington DC 20044-4412*

Dear Chief

I am writing in support of proposed changes to current federal alcohol beverage labeling regulations. As you are aware, current regulations do not allow most beer, wine and distilled spirits companies to provide information about their products so that consumers can make informed choices about what to drink and how much to drink. By permitting information to be included on labels, I believe that alcoholic beverage labels can better serve the information needs of consumer if they are permitted to contain important information about the contents of the product. The Alcohol & Tobacco Tax & Trade Bureau ("TTB") is to be commended for seeking public comment regarding such a change.

Most food, soft drinks, over-the-counter drugs, and even dietary supplements provide consumers with basic consumer information on the label. Alcohol beverages (with few exceptions) are the only major class of consumable goods that do not provide this type of information on the label. TTB should allow labels voluntarily to list information such as serving size and servings per container, as well as alcohol, calories, fat, carbohydrates and protein per serving. Of all this information, the amount of alcohol per serving would be highly beneficial for consumers to have.

The government's advice on moderate drinking, as provided in Dietary Guidelines for Americans (USDA & HHS, 2005) states as follows:

The majority of American adults consume alcohol. Those who do so should drink alcoholic beverages in moderation..vloderation is defined as the consumption of up to one drink per day for women and up to two drinks per day for men.

Twelve fluid ounces of regular beer, 5 fluid ounces of wine, or 1.5 fluid ounces of 80 proof distilled spirits count as one drink for purposes of explaining moderation.
(p. 44)

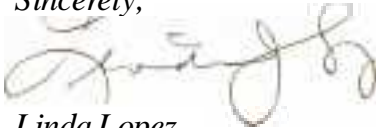
Providing information on alcohol per serving and servings per container on beer, wine and distilled spirits labels will help consumers to better understand the government's advice. Given the wide variety of formulations, container sizes and alcohol concentrations in today's products, and the regulatory disparities as to what information may be placed on beer, wine and distilled spirits labels, some consumers might welcome more information about how particular products relate to the Guidelines' advice.

Consumer Serving 'Facts will be more meaningful if TTB makes clear in this rulemaking what constitutes a "serving." This essential fact allows consumers to make more informed comparisons between products and better understand what is in a standard serving of any alcohol beverage.

The standard serving definition used in the Dietary Guidelines (12 ounces of regular beer, 5 ounces of table wine and 1.5 ounces of 80 proof distilled spirits) is one widely used by U.S. government agencies, public health groups, consumer groups, and a majority of state driver's license manuals. It makes sense to use the same definition as the benchmark for labels.

I thank you in advance for your consideration of this rule change and appreciate your support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Linda Lopez', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Linda Lopez

State Representative

District 29

Assistant Leader, House Democrats

LL/cfp